A GENERAL LOOK AT RITES

By

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In the Name of Allah,
the Most Compassionate, the Merciful

Praise belongs to Allah, the Lord of all beings;
the Most Compassionate, the Merciful;
the Master of the Dray of Judgement;
Thee only we serve, and to Thee alone we pray for succour;
Guide us in the straight path;
the path of those whom Thou hast blessed,
who are immune from Thy wrath
and have never gone astray.

O' Allah! send you blessings to the head of your messengers and the last of your prophets, Muhammad
and his pure and cleansed progeny.
Also send your blessings to all your prophets and envoys.


بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الحمد لله رب العالمين الرحمن الرحيم
مالك يوم الدين إياك نعبد وإياك نستعين
اهدنا الصراط المستقيم صراط الذين
أنعمت عليهم غير المغضوب عليهم
ولا الضالين
اللهم صل على
سيد رسلك وخاتم أنبيائك
محمد وآله الطيبين الطاهرين
وصل على جميع الأنبياء والمرسلين

CONTENTS

تصـديـر

(نظره عامه في العبادات) "بحث في محتوى العباده الاسلاميه و دورها في بناء الانسان الكامل" كما جاء وصف الكتاب في مفتتحه . و لا نجد ايه حاجه الى التعريف بالكتاب اكثر مما يعرف الكتاب ، نفسه به لمن يقروءه بتدبر و امعان .

و هذا الكتاب ، وان صغر حجمه ، لكنه كبر الانتفاع به ، و سما في اصاله البحث و عمق التفكير و استيعاب الموضوع في خطوطه العامه . و حسبنا ان موءلفه هو المفكر الاسلامي الكبير السيد محمد باقر الصدر ، الذي قمنا بشيء من التعريف به و

بموءلفاته وآثاره في فاتحه الترجمه الانجليزيه لكتابه الاخر (المرسل . الرساله . الرسول) .

و نحمد الله سبحانه ان وفقنا للقيام بترجمه هذا الكتاب الى الانجليزيه ونشره ، ونضرع اليه عزوجل ان يسدد خطانا و يهدينا صراطه المستقيم ، انه نعم المولى و نعم النصير .

٢/ ٤/ ١٣٩٩	الموءسسه العالميه للخدمات الاسلاميه
١/ ٣/ ١٩٧٩	(لجنه التأليف و الترجمه و النشر)
	طهـران ــ ايـران

FOREWORD

Rites are considered among the matters of worship whose depths cannot be fathomed by humans, nor their philosophy be completely comprehended nor the purpose behind their legislation understood. . . ! Rather, the believer must perform them as means of submitting and seeking nearness to Allah, to Whom belong Might and Majesty.

Man has achieved tremendous scientific advancement. This has caused the new generation to be inquisitive about the logic and aims from such parrot worship.

The renowned Muslim scholar as-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir as-Sadr has answered this question in this invaluable booklet A *General Look at Rites*. We have already given a brief introduction of the author in the foreword of his other book namely *The Revealer, the Messenger and the Message* in its English translation.

We praise the Almighty Allah Who bestowed on us the success of translating and publishing this book. We pray to Him to help us continuously in accomplishing our aims in the service of His cause. He is the Supreme Master, the Supreme Helper.

World Organization For Islamic Services
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2/4/1399
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WORSHIP IS A PERMANENT HUMAN NEED

Rites enjoy an important role in Islam. Their injunctions represent an important part of jurisprudence and worshipping conduct which formulates a noticeable phenomenon in the daily life of the religious person.

The system of rites in Islamic jurisprudence represents one of its static facets which cannot be affected by the general trend of life or the circumstances of civil progress in man's life except by a small portion, contrary to other judicial aspects which are flexible and dynamic;

the method of their application and utilization is affected by the circumstances pertaining to civil progress in man's life, such as the system of deals and contracts.

For example, in the sphere of worship, the man of the age of electricity and space prays, fasts and performs the pilgrimage just as his ancestor from the age of stone mill used to pray, fast and perform the pilgrimage.

It is true, however, that in the civil aspect of getting prepared for a rite may differ from this and that; for this travels to his pilgrimage in a plane, while that used to travel within a camel caravan; when this covers his body - while praying - with clothes manufactured by the machine, that covers his body with clothes he hand-sewed them. But the general formula of worship, as well as its method and legislation, is the same. The necessity of its application has never suffered any change, nor has its legislating value been affected or shaken up by the con-

tinuous growth of man's control over nature and his means of living.

This means that Islamic *shad`ah* (Jurisprudence) has not prescribed prayer, fast, pilgrimage and other Islamic rites temporarily, or as a juridical formula limited to conditions it lived in its early epochs of history; rather, it enjoined these rites on man while he uses the atomic energy to mobilize the engine just as it has enjoined them on man while ploughing his field with a hand plough.

Thus do we derive the conclusion that the system of rites treats a permanent need in the life of man, with whom it is created, remaining the same in his own entity in spite of the continuous progress in his life-style. This is so because the application of a fixed prescription requires a fixed need. Hence, this question comes up:

Is really there a fixed need in the life of man ever since jurisprudence started its

cultivating role, remaining as such until today, so that we may interpret - in the light of its stability - the stability of the formulas whereby jurisprudence has treated and satisfied this same need, so that in the end we can explain the stability of worship in its positive role in man's life?!

It may seem, at the first look, that to suggest such a fixed need of this sort is not acceptable, that it does not coincide with the reality of man's life when we compare today's man with distant tomorrow's, for we certainly find man continuously getting further - in the method, nature of problems and factors of progress of his life - from the circumstances of the tribal society wherein appeared the concluding jurisprudence, his pagan problems, worries and limited asnir' ations. Such continuous distance forces a basic change in all of his needs, worries and requirements, and in the end in the method of treating and organizing these needs. Therefore, how can rites - in their own par-

ticular juristic system - perform a real role on this field which is contemporary to man's life-span, in spite of the vast progress in means and methods of living? If rites such as prayers, ablution, ceremonial washing and fasting had been useful during some stage in the life of the Bedouin man, taking part in cultivating his behaviour, his practical commitment to clean his body and keep it from excessive eating and drinking, . . . well, these same goals are achieved by modern man through the very nature of his civilized life and the norm of social living. So, these rites are no more a necessary need as they used to be once upon a time, nor have they retained a role in building man's civilization or solving his sophisticated problems . . . !

But this theory is wrong, for the social progress in means and tools, in the plough changing in man's hand to a steam or electrical machine; rather, all this imposes a change in the relationship between man and nature and in any material form it takes ... Anything repre-

senting the relationship between man and nature such as agriculture which represents the relationship between the land farmer, progresses materialistically in form and function accordingly.

As for rites, these really do not form a relationship between man and nature so that they might be affected` by such a progress. They form, instead, a relationship between man and his Lord. Such a relationship possesses a spiritual role controlling the relationship between man and his brother man. In both cases, however, we find that humanity, historically, lives a certain number of fixed needs faced equally by the man of the age of oil as well as that of the age of electricity. The system of rites in Islam is the fixed solution for the fixed needs of this sort, and for problems whose nature is not sequential: instead, they are problems which face man during his individual, social and cultural build-up. Such solution, called "rites", is still alive in its objectives until today, becoming an essential condition for man

to overcome his problems and succeed in pract-ising his civilized vocations.

In order to clearly know all this, we have to point out some fixed lines of needs and problems in man's life, and the role rites play in satisfying such needs and overcoming such problems.

These lines are as follows:-

1) The need to be linked to the Absolute;
2) The need for subjectivity in purpose and self-denial;
3) The need for inner feeling of respon-sibility to guarantee execution.

These are the details of such outlines:

1. THE NEED TO BE LINKED TO THE ABSOLUTE

The system of rites is a way to organize the practical aspect of the relationship between man

and his Lord; therefore, it cannot separate his evaluation from that of this very relationship and of its role in man's life! From here, both of these questions are inter-related:-

First: What is the value achieved by the relationship between man and his Lord for this man in his civilized march? And is it a fixed value treating a fixed need in this march, or is it a sequential one linked to timely needs or limited problems, losing its significance at the end of the stage limiting such needs and problems?

Second: What is the role practised by rites as regarding that relationship and the extent of its significance as a practical dedication to the relation between man and God?

What follows is a summary of the necessary explanation concerning both questions:-

The Link Between the Absolute is A Two-Edged Problem

The observer, scrutinizing the different acts of the stage-story of man in history, may find out that the problems 'are different and the worries diversified in their given daily formulas. But if we went beyond these formulas, infiltrating into the depth and essence of the problem, we would find, through many of such different daily formulas, one mainly essential and fixed problem with two edges or contrasting poles wherefrom mankind suffers during his civilized advancement along history. It is from one angle expressing this problem: the problem of loss and non-entity, thus expressing the negative side of the problem. And from another angle, it expresses the problem of extreme in entity and belonging by c:olinecting the relative facts to which man belongs to an Absolute; thus expressing the positive side of the same problem. The Concluding Jurisprudence (of Islam) has given the name "atheism' to the first problem, which

it expresses very obviously, and the name "idolatory" and *shirk* (believing in one or many partners with God), as also an obvious expression of it. The continuous struggle of Islam against atheism and *shirk is,* in its civilized reality, a struggle against both problems in their historical dimensions.

Both problems meet into one essential point, and that is: deterring man's movement to advance from a continuously good imaginative creativity, for the problem of loss means to man that he is a being in continuous loss, not belonging to an Absolute, to Whom he can support himself in his hard march of a long range, deriving from His Absolutism and Encompassment help, sustenance and clear vision of the goal, joining through that Absolute his own movement to the universe, to the whole existence, to eternity and perpetuity, defining his own relationship to Him and his position in the inclusive cosmic framework, for the movement at loss without the aid of an Absolute is but a

random movement like that of a feather in the wind, the phenomena around it affect it without being able to affect them. There is no accomplishment or productivity in the great march of man along history without a connection to and promulgation with an Absolute in an objective march.

But this same connection, on the other hand, directs the other side of the problem, that of extreme entity, by changing the "relative" to "absolute", a problem which faces man continuously. For man weaves his loyalty to a case so that such loyalty provides him with the ability to move and continue marching. But such loyalty freezes gradually and gets stripped off its relative circumstances within which he was accurate, and the human mind will derive out of it an "absolute" without an end, without a limit to responding to its demands. In religious terminology, such an "absolute" eventually changes to a god worshipped instead of a need that requires fulfillment.

When the "relative" changes to an "absolute," to a "god" of this sort, it becomes a factor in encircling man's movement, freezing its capacities to develop and create, paralysing man from performing his naturally open role in the march:

لَا تَجْعَلْ مَعَ اللّٰهِ اِلٰـهًا اٰخَرَ فَتَقْعُدَ مَذْمُومًا مَخْذُولًا

(الاسراء: ٢٢)

Associate not with Allah any other god, lest you sit despised, neglected. (Qur'an, *17:22)*

This is a true fact applicable to all "gods" mankind made along history, albeit if they were made during the idolatory stage of worship or its succeeding stage. From the stage of tribe to that of science, we find a series of gods which deterred mankind who worshipped them, treating them as an "absolute," from making any accurate progress . . .

Indeed, from the tribe to which man sub-

mitted his alliance, considering it as an actual need dictated by his particular living circumstances, he went to the extreme, changing it to an "absolute," without being able to see anything except through them. Hence, they became an obstacle in his way to progress.

To science, to which modern man deservedly granted alliance, for it paved for him the way to control nature . . ., but he sometimes exaggerated such an alliance, turning it to an absolute alliance, trespassing his limits while being infatuated by it. Thus, man derived out of science, with which he was infatuated, an "absolute" to worship, offering it the rites of obeisance and loyalty, refusing for its own sake all ideals and facts which can never be measured by metres or seen by microscopes.

Accordingly, every limited and relative thing, if man wove out of it, at a certain stage, an absolute to which he thus relates himself, becomes at a stage of intellectual maturity a

shackle on the mind that made it, because of its being limited and relative!

Hence, man's march has to have an Absolute . . . !!!

And He has to be a real Absolute capable of absorbing the -human march, directing it to the right path no matter how much advance ment it achieves or how far it extends on its lengthy line, wiping out all gods that encircle the march and deter it . . . !

Thus can the problem be solved in both of its poles ... !

Belief in God is the Remedy

Such a remedy is shown by what Divine Jurisprudence has presented man on earth: The Belief in God as the Absolute to Whom limited man can tie his own march without causing him

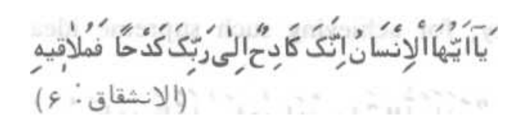
any contradiction along his long path.

Belief in God, then, treats the negative aspect of the problem, refusing loss, atheism and non-entity, for it places man in a position of responsibility: to whose movement and management is the whole cosmos related, becoming the vicegerent of God on earth. Vicegerency implies responsibility, and the latter puts man between two poles: one Deputy before Whom man bears responsibility, and a reward he receives according to his conduct, between God and resurrection, infinitude and eternity, while he moves within such a sphere a responsible and purposeful movement.

Belief in God treats the positive aspect of the problem - that of the extreme in entity, forcing restrictions on man and curbing his swift march - according to this manner:

First: This aspect of the problem is created by changing the limited and relative to an

"absolute" through intellectual exertion and by stripping the relative off its circumstances and limitations. As for the Absolute provided by the belief in God, this has never been the fabrication of a stage of the human intellect, so that it may become, during the new stage of intellectual maturity, limited to the mind that made it . . . ! Nor has it ever been the off-spring of a limited need of an individual or a group, so that its becoming absolute may place it as a weapon in the hand of the individual or group in order to guarantee its illegal inter-ests . . . ! For God, the Praised, the High, is an Absolute without limits, one whose fixed Attributes absorb all the supreme ideals of man, His vicegerent on earth, of comprehension and knowledge, ability and strength, justice and wealth. This means that the path leading to Him is without a limit; hence, moving towards Him requires the continuity and relative movement and a relative acceleration of the limited (man) towards the Absolute (God) without a stop:



O' thou man! Verily thou art ever toiling on towards thy Lord - painfully toiling, - but thou shalt meet Him! (Qur'an, 84:6)

He grants this movement His own supreme ideals derived from comprehension, knowledge, ability and justice, as well as other qualities of that Absolute, towards Whom the march is directed . . . ! The march towards the Absolute is all knowledge, all potential, all justice and all wealth. In other words, the human march is a continuously successive struggle against all sorts of ignorance, incapacity, oppression and poverty.

As long as these are the very goals of the march related to this Absolute, they are, then, not merely a dedication to God, but also a continuous struggle for the sake of man, for his

dignity, for achieving such supreme ideals for him

وَمَنْ جَاهَدَ فَإِنَّمَا يُجَاهِدُ لِنَفْسِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَغَنِيٌّ
عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ (العنكبوت: ٦)

And if any strive (with might and main), *they do so for their own souls: for Allah is free of all needs from all creation.* (Qur'an, *29:6)*

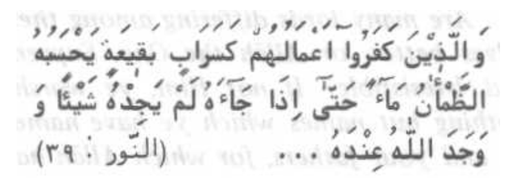
. . . فَمَنِ اهْتَدَى فَلِنَفْسِهِ وَمَن ضَلَّ فَإِنَّمَا يَضِلُّ
عَلَيْهَا . . . (الزّمر: ٤١)

. . . *He, then, that receives guidance benefits his own soul: but he that strays injures his own soul ...* (Qur'an, *39:41)*

Contrariwise, whimsical absolutes and false gods cannot absorb the march with all its aspirations, for these manufactured absolutes are the children of an incapable man's brain, or the need of the poor man, or the oppression of the

oppressor; therefore, they jointly are linked to ignorance, incapacity and oppression; they can never bless man's continuous struggle against them... !

Second: Being linked to God Almighty as the Absolute Who absorbs all of the aspirations of the human march means at the same time rejecting all of those whimsical absolutes which used to cause excessive entity and waging a continuous war and endless struggle against all sorts of idolatory and artificial worship. Thus, man will be emancipated from the mirage of these false absolutes which stood as an obstacle in his way towards God, falsifying his goal and encircling his march:

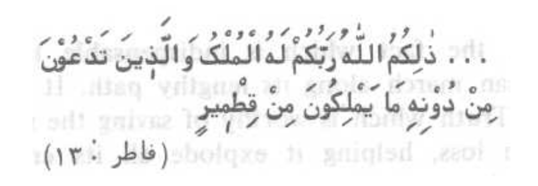


But the Unbelievers, their deeds are like a

*mirage in sandy deserts, which the man parched with thirst mistakes for water; until **when he comes up to** it, he finds it to **be nothing:** but he finds Allah* (ever) *with him ... (Qur'an, 24:39)*

. . . ءأرباب متفرقون خير أم الله الواحد القهار * ما تعبدون من دونه إلا أسماء سميتموها أنتم وآباؤكم ما أنزل الله بها من سلطان . . .
(يوسف . ٣٩ — ٤٠)

. . . *Are many lords differing among themselves better, or Allah the One, Supreme and Irresistible? If not Him, ye worship nothing but names which ye have named, ye and your fathers, for which Allah hath sent down no authority: . . .* (Qur'an, *12:39-40)*



. . . *Such is Allah your Lord: to Him belongs all Dominion. And those whom ye invoke besides Him have not the least power.* (Qur'an, 35:13)

If we consider the main slogan heaven put forward in this respect: "There is no god but Allah," we will find out that it joined in it the linking of the human march to the True Absolute with the rejection of every artificial absolute . . . The history of the march, in its living actuality, came across ages to emphasize the organic link between this rejection and that strong and aware tie to God Almighty. For as far as he goes away from the True God, man sinks in the labyrinth of different gods and lords. Both rejection and positive link to "There is no god but Allah" are but two faces for one

fact, the fact which is indispensable to the human march along its lengthy path. It is but the Truth which is worthy of saving the march from loss, helping it explode all its creative energies, emancipating it from each and every false and obstructing "absolute" . . .

Rites are Practical Expression

Just as man was born carrying in him all potentials of the experience on life's stage, plus all seeds its success, such as awareness, activity and conditioning, so was he born tied by nature to the Absolute . . . . ! This is so because his relationship with the Absolute is one of the requirements of his own success whereby he overcomes the problems facing his civilized march, as we have already seen, and there is no experience more sustaining and inclusive, more meaningful, than this of Faith in man's life. It has been a phenomenon attached to man since time immemorial. During all stages of

history, such a social and continuous attachment proves - through experience - that escaping towards the Absolute, aspiring towards Him from beyond borders lived by man, is a genuine inclination of man no matter how diversified the shapes of such inclination are, how different its methods and degrees of awareness . . .

But Faith, as an instinct, is not enough to guarantee bringing to reality an attachment to the Absolute in its correct form, for that is linked to the Truth through the method of satisfying such an instinct and the manner of utilizing it, just like the case of any other instinct. The correct behaviour in satisfying it in a manner parallel to all other instincts and inclinations, being in harmony with it, is the only guarantee of the ultimate benefit of man! Also, the behaviour according to or against an instinct is the one that fosters the instinct, deepens, eliminates or suffocates it . . . ! So do the seeds of mercy and compassion die within man's self through the continuous and practical

sympathizing with the miserable, the wronged, and the poor. . . !

From this point, Faith in God, the deep feeling of aspiring towards the unknown and the attachment to the Absolute, have all to have some direction which determines the manner of satisfying such feeling and the way to deepen it, fixing it in a way compatible with all other genuine feelings of man.

Without a direction, such feeling may have a setback and may be afflicted with various sorts of deviation, just like what happened to the strayed religious feeling during most epochs of history.

Without a deepened conduct, such feeling may become minimized, and the attachment to the Absolute ceases to be an active reality in man's life capable of exploding good energies.

The religion which laid the slogan of

"There is no god but Allah," promulgating with it both rejection and affirmation, is the Director.

Rites are factors which perform the role of deepening such feeling, for they are but a practical expression and an expression of the religious instinct; through it does this instinct grow and get deepened in man's life.

We notice, too, that in accurate rites - being a practical expression of the link to the Absolute - both affirmation and rejection pro mulgate- They are, thus, a continuous confirmation from man to his link with God Almighty, and the rejection of any other "absolute" of those false ones. When one starts his prayers by declaring that "God is Great, i.e., *Allahu akbar,"* he confirms this rejection. And when he declares that His Prophet is also His Servant-slave and Messenger, he confirms this rejection. And when he abstains from enjoying the pleasures of life, abstaining from enjoying even the necessities of life for the sake of God, defying the

temptations and their effects, he, too, confirms this rejection ... !

These rituals have succeeded in the practical sphere of bringing up generations of believers, at the hands of the Holy Prophet and his succeeding pious leaders, those whose prayers embodied within their own selves the rejection of all evil powers and their subjection, and the "absolutes" of Kisra and Caesar got minimized before their march as did all "absolutes" of limited man's whims. . .

In this light do we come to know that worship is a fixed necessity in man's life and civilized march, for there can be no march without an "absolute" to whom it is linked, deriving from him its ideals, and there is no "absolute" that can absorb the march along its lengthy path except the True Absolute (God), the Glorified One. Besides Him, artificial absolutes definitely form, in this way or that, an absolute curbing the march's growth. Attach-

ment to the True Absolute, then, is a fixed need; and rejecting artificial absolutes is also a fixed need; and there can be no attachment to the True Absolute without a practical expression of this attachment, confirming it and continuously fixing it; and such a practical expression is none but worship! Therefore, worship is a fixed need ... !

2. SUBJECTIVITY OF PURPOSE AND SELF-DENIAL

In each stage of the human civilization, and in each period of man's life, people face numerous interests whose achievement requires a quantitative action in this degree or the other. No matter how diversified the qualities of these interests or the manner of bringing them to life from an age to another are, they can still be divided into two sorts of interests:-

One: interests whose materialistic gains and outcomes go to the individual himself, on whose work and endeavour depends the achievement of that interest.

The Other: interests whose gains go to those other than the direct worker or group he belongs to. In this second kind are included all sorts of labour which aim at an even bigger goal than the existence of the worker himself, for every big goal cannot be usually achieved except through the collective efforts and endeavours of a long period of time.

The first sort of interests guarantees the inner motif of the individual: its availability and effort to secure it, for as long as the worker is the one who reaps the fruits of the interest and directly enjoys it, it is natural to find in him the effort to secure it and work for its sake.

As for the second kind of interests, here the motif to secure these interests is not sufficient, for the interests here are not only the active worker's; and often his share of labour and hardship is greater than that of his share of the huge interest. From here, man needs an upbringing of subjectivity of purpose and self-denial in motif; i.e., that he must work for the sake of others, of the group! In other words, he has to work for a purpose greater than his own existence and personal materialistic interest. Such upbringing is necessary for the man of the electricity and atom age as it equally is for the man who used to fight with the sword and travel on camel-back! They both confront the worries of construction and of the great aims and situations 'which demand self-denial and working for the sake of others, sowing the seeds whose fruits may not be seen by the person who sowed them . . . ! It is necessary, then, to raise every individual to perform a portion of his labour and effort not merely for his own self and its personal materialistic

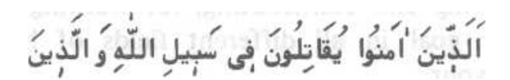
interests, so that he will be capable of contributing with self-denial, of aiming at a purely "objective" goal . . . !

Rites perform a large role in this upbringing. These, as we have already seen, are acts of man performed for the sake of achieving the pleasure of the Almighty God. Therefore, they are invalid if the worshipper performs them just for his own personal interest. They are improper if the purpose behind them is personal glory, public applause, or a dedication for his own ego, within his circle and environment. In fact, they even become unlawful acts deserving the punishment of the worshipper! All this is for the sake of the worshipper trying, through his worship, an objective purpose, with all what this implies of truthfulness, sincerity, and tbc worshipper will totally dedicate his worship to Almighty God with sincerity and truthfulness.

God's Path is purely a path of the service of all humanity, for each act performed for the

sake of God is but an act for the sake of God's servants, for God is totally sufficient, independent of His servants. Since the True Absolute God is above any limit, specification, not related to any group or biased to any direction, His Path, then practically equates that of all mankind's. To work for God, and for God alone, is to work for people, for the goal of all people. It is a psychological and spiritual training that never ceases to function.

Whenever the jurisdic path of God is mentioned, it can be taken to mean exactly all mankind's path. Islam has made God's Path one of the avenues to spend zakat, meaning thereby: to spend for all humanity's good and interest. It also urges to fight for the cause of God in defense of all the weak among humans, calling it *jihad, i.e.,* "fighting for the Path of God;"



كَفَرُوا يُقَاتِلُونَ فِى سَبِيلِ الطَّاغُوتِ . . .

(النِّسَاء : ٧٦)

Those who believe (in God) *fight in the cause of Allah, and those who reject Faith fight in the cause of Evil: . . .* (Qur'an, *4:76)*

Besides, if we come to know that worship demands different types of endeavour, as it sometimes imposes on man only some physical exertion, as in prayer; and sometimes psychological, as in fasting; and a third time financial, as in *zakat;* and a fourth one an exertion on the level of self-sacrifice or danger, as in *jihad* . . . If we come to know all this, we will be able to figure the depth and capacity of the spiritual and psychological training practised by man through different rites for the objective purpose, for giving and contributing, for working for a higher goal in all different fields of human endeavour.

On this basis can you find the vast difference between a person who grew up on making endeavours to please God, brought up to labour without waiting for a compensation on the working grounds, and that who grew up always measuring a work according to the extent he can achieve of his own personal interest, basing it on the gain he gets from it, not comprehending - out of this measuring and estimating - except the language of figures and market prices . . . ! ! ! A person like this one can be none other than a merchant in his social practices, regardless of their field or type.

Considering upbringing on the objective purpose, Islam has always tied the value of a work to its own impulses, separating them from its results. The value of an act in Islam is not in what results and gains it brings forth to the worker or to all people; rather, it is the motifs behind it, their cleanliness, objectivity and self-denial. The person who reaches the discovery of a medicine for a dangerous disease,

saving thereby the lives of millions of patients, God does not evaluate his discovery according to the size of its results and the number of those it saves from death; rather, He estimates it according to the feelings and desires which formulate within the discoverer the motif to spend an effort to make that discovery. If he did not spend his effort except to get a privilege that enables him to sell it and gain millions of dollars, this deed of his is not considered by God to be equal except to any other purely commercial deed, for the inner logic of personal'motifs, which push him to discover a medicine for a dangerous disease, may equally push him to discover means of destructign if he finds a market that buys them! A deed is considered commendable and virtuous if the motifs behind it go beyond the ego; if it is for the sake of God and the servants of God. According to the degree of its self-denial and the participation of God's servants in its making, a deed is elevated and highly evaluated.

3. THE INNER FEELING OF RESPONSIBILITY

If we observe humanity in any of its historical periods, we will find it following a particular system of its life, a specific manner in distributing rights and responsibilities among people, and that according to the amount it acquires of securities for its members to cling to this system and to its implementation, it will be closer to stability and the achievement of the general goals expected from that system.

This fact is equally true concerning the future, as well as the past, for it is an established fact of man's civilized march along its lengthy range.

Among the securities is that which is objective, such as penalties enforced by the group to punish the individual who transgresses beyond his limits. And among them is that which is inner, i.e., man's inner feeling of responsibility towards his social obligations,

towards whatever obligations the group demands of him, determining, spontaneously, his own rights.

In order to be an actual fact in man's life, the inner feeling of responsibility needs the belief in a supervisor from whose knowledge not an atom's weight in earth or sky escapes, and to a practical application through which such a feeling grows, and according to which the feeling of such an inclusive supervision lays roots.

The supervision, for whose knowledge not even an atom's weight escapes, is created in man's life as a result of his link with the True Absolute, the All-knowing, the Omnipotent, the One Whose knowledge encompasses everything, for this link with His self saves man the need for such a supervision, thus enabling the creation of an inner feeling of responsibility.

The practical application, through which

this inner feeling of responsibility grows, materializes through practising rites. For worship is the duty imposed by the Unseen, and by this we mean that checking it externally is impossible. Any external measures to enforce it can never be successful, for it stands through the self's own purpose and the spiritual attachment to work for God; this is a matter which cannot be included in the calculation of a subjective supervision from the outside, nor can any legal measure guarantee that either. Rather, the only capable supervision in this respect is the one resulting from the attachment to the Absolute, the Unseen, the One from Whose knowledge nothing escapes . . . The only possible assurity on this level is the inner feeling of responsibility. This means that the person who practices worship is performing a duty - which differs from any other social obligation or project - when he borrows and pays back, or when he contracts and adheres to the conditions, when he borrows money from others and returns it to the debtor . . . , he performs a duty

which lies within the range of social supervision's monitoring; hence, his estimation, in another manner, of the predictment of social reaction - in case he backs up - dictates to the same person the decision to do it.

The ritual duty, towards the Unknown, is one whose inner implication none knows except God, the Praised One, the Omnipotent, for it is the result of the inner feeling of responsibility. Through religious practices, such an inner feeling grows, and man gets used to behave according to it. Through the medium of such feeling can we find the good citizen. It is not sufficient for good citizenship that a person is reluctant to perform the legal rights of others for fear of the social reaction towards such reluctance. Rather, good citizenship is achieved by man who does not relax his own inner feeling of responsibility. Had the feeling of fear of social reaction towards reluctance been the basis of good citizenship in a good society, then the escape from such obligations is quite possible

in many cases when, say, it is possible for the individual to hide his reluctance, or give a false interpretation of it, or protect himself from the social reaction in this manner or that. Then, there is no guarantee in all of these cases except the inner feeling of responsibility.

We notice that it is often recommended to perform optional rites secretly, rather than publicly. There even are rites which are secretive by nature such as fasting, for it is an inner curb which cannot be checked externally. There are rites for which a secretive environment is chosen, avoiding the public stage, such as the nightly (nafl) optional prayers whose performance requires after mid-night time. All this is for the sake of deepening the aspect of worshipping the Unseen, linking it more and more to the inner feeling of responsibility. Thus, this feeling gets deepened through the practice of rites, and man gets used to behave on its basis, forming a strong guarantee for the good individual's discharge of his duties and obligations.

GENERAL OUTLOOKS OF RITES

If we cast a general look at the rites we have observed in this book, comparing them with each other, we can then derive some general outlooks of these rites; here are some of these general outlooks:-

The Unseen in Explaining Rites

We came to know previously the important role worship performs totally in man's life and that it expresses a fixed need in his civilized march.

From another aspect: if we scrutinize and analyse the particulars which distinguish each worship from the other, we often are able, in the light of advanced science, to be acquainted with the pieces of wisdom and secrets Islamic jurisprudence expresses in this regard and modern science has been able to discover.

This wonderful agreement between the outcomes of modern science and many particulars of Islamic jurisprudence, and whatever rules and regulations it decided, expresses a dazzling support for the position of this jurisprudence, deeply emphasizing its being God-inspired.

In spite of all this, however, we quite often face unseen points in worship, i.e., a group of details whose secret cannot be comprehended by the person practising worship, nor can he interpret them materialistically; for must sunset prayer be three prostrations *(rak`ah)* while the noon-time prayer more than that?! And why should each *rak'ah* include bowing down once instead of twice, two prostrations instead of one?! . . . beside other questions of this sort which can be put forth.

And we call such an aspect of worship, which cannot be interpreted, "unseen." We find this aspect, in this manner or that, in most rites brought forth by the Islamic jurisprudence.

From here, we can consider obscurity in the meaning we have already mentioned as a general phenomenon in rites one of their common characteristics.

This obscurity is linked to the rites and to their imposed role jointly, for the role of rites, as we have already come to know previously, is to emphasize the attachment to the Absolute and deepen that practically. The bigger the element of submission and yielding in a worship is, the stronger its effect in deepening the link between the worshipper and his Lord. If the deed practised by the worshipper is understood in all its dimensions, clear in its wisdom and benefit in all details, the element of submission and yielding gets minimized, and it will be dominated by motifs of interest and benefit, no more a worship of God as much as it is a deed of benefit practised by the worshipper so that he might derive advantage out of it, benefiting of its results.

Just as the spirit of obedience and attachment in the soldier grows, getting deepened through military training, by giving him orders and requiring him to perform them with obedience and without discussion, so does the feeling of the worshipping person grow and get deepened in its attachment to his Lord through requiring him to practice these rites in their unseen aspects with submission and yielding. For submission and yielding require the assumption of the existence of an unseen aspect and the attempt to question this unseen aspect of worship. Demanding its interpretation and limitation of interest means stripping worship off its reality - as a practical expression of submission and obedience - and measuring it by measurements of benefit and interest like any other deed.

We notice that this obscurity is almost ineffective in rites representing a great general interest, one that conflicts with the personal interest of the worshipper, as is the case with

jihad that represents a great general interest which contrasts the desire of the person performing it to preserve his life and blood, and also in the case of *zakat* which represents a great general interest which contrasts the strong desire of the person paying it to preserve his wealth and property. The issue of *jihad is* very well understood by the person performing it, and the issue of *zakat is generally* understood by the person who pays it, neither *jihad* nor *zakat* thus loses any element of submission and obedience (to God), for the difficulty of sacrificing life and property is what makes man's acceptance of a worship - for which he sacrifices both life and property - is indeed a great deal of submission and obedience. Add to this the fact that *jihad* and *zakat,* and their likes of rites, are not meant to be merely aspects of upbringing just the individual, but also the achievement of social benefits secured thereby. Accordingly, we observe that obscurity is highlighted more and more in rites dominated by the educating aspect of the individual, such as

prayer and fasting.

Thus do we derive the conclusion that the unseen in worship is strongly linked to its educating role in attaching the individual to his Lord, deepening his relationship with his Lord ...

Inclusion in Worship

When we observe the different Islamic rites, we find in them an element of inclusion of all different aspects of life. Rites have never been limited to specific norms of rituals, nor have they been restricted to only needs which embody the manner of glorifying God, the Praised, the High, like bowing, prostrating; praying and invoking; rather, they have been extended to include all sectors of human activity. *jihad*, for example, is a rite. It is a social activity. *zakat* is a rite. It, too, is a social activity, a financial one. Fasting is a rite. It is a nutritious

system. Both ablution and ghusl (ceremonial bath) are norms of worship. They are two ways of cleaning the body. This inclusion of worship expresses a general trend of Islamic upbringing aiming at linking man, in all his deeds and activities, with Almighty God, converting each useful deed to worship, no matter what field or type! In order to find a fixed basis for this trend, fixed rites were distributed to the different fields of human activity, preparing man to train himself on pouring the spirit of worship over all his good activities, and the spirit of the mosque over all places of his works: in the field, the factory, the ship or the office, as long as his deed is a good one, for the sake of God, the Glorified, the High.

In this respect, Islamic jurisprudence differs from two other religious trends, one: a trend to separate worship from life; and another: a trend to limit life to a narrow frame of worship as do monks and mystics.

As for the first trend, it separates worship from life, leaving worship to be conducted at places made especially for it, requiring man to be present in these places in order to pay God His dues and worship Him, so much so that when he gets out of them to different fields of life, he says farewell to worship, giving himself up to the affairs of his life until he goes back again to those holy places! This duality of worship and different activities of life paralyse worship and obstruct its constructive upbringing role to develop man's motifs and make the objective, enabling him to go beyond his ego and narrow personal interests in various scopes of his deeds. God, the Glorified and Praised, never insisted on being worshipped for the sake of His own Person, since He is independent of His worshippers, so that He would be satisfied with a worship of this sort, nor did He ever put Himself as the goal and objective of the human march, so that man may bow his head down to Him within the scope of his worship, and that is it . . . ! Rather, He meant

such worship to build the good person who is capable of going beyond his ego, participating in a bigger role in the march. The exemplary achievement of this cannot be reached except when the spirit of worship gradually extends to other activities of life, for its extension - as we have already seen - means an extension of objectivity of purpose and the inner feeling of responsible behaviour, and the ability to go beyond the self to be in harmony with man within his inclusive cosmic frame, with eternity, immortality that both encompass him ... !

From here came. Islamic jurisprudence to distribute the rites on the different fields of life, urging the practice of ritual rites in each good deed, explaining to man that the difference between the mosque, which is God's house, and man's home is not in the quality of building or slogan; rather, the mosque has deserved to be God's house because it is the yard whereupon man practises a deed that goes beyond his ego and wherefrom he aims at a bigger goal than

that dictated by the logic of limited materialistic interests, and that this yard ought to extend to include all life's stages. Each yard, whereupon man does a deed that goes beyond his self, aiming thereby to achieve the pleasure of God and all people, does, indeed, carry the mosque's spirit.

As for the second trend, which restricts life in a narrow frame of worship, it tried to confine man to the mosque instead of extending the meaning of the mosque to include all the yard which witnesses a good deed of man ... !

This trend believes that man lives an inner conflict between his soul and body, and that he cannot accomplish one of these two except at the cost of the other. Therefore, in order he may spiritually grow and be elevated, he has to deprive his body from the good things, shrinking his presence on life's stage, battling continuously against his desires and aspirations in different fields of life, until he finally achieves victory

over all of them through long abstention and deprivation and the practice of certain rituals.

Islamic jurisprudence rejects this trend, too, because it wants rites for the sake of life. Life cannot be confiscated for the sake of rites. At the same time, it tries hard to ensure that a good man pours the spirit of worship over all of his behaviour and activity. This must not be taken to imply that he has to stop his different activities in life and confine himself between the altar's walls; rather, it means that he converts all his activities to rituals ... !

The mosque is but a base wherefrom a good man sets to conduct his daily behaviour, but it is not limited to that behaviour only! The Holy Prophet has said to Abu Dharr al-Ghifari: "If you are able to eat and drink for the sake of none save Allah.... do it!"

Thus, worship serves life. Its upbringing and religious success is determined by its exten-

sion, in meaning and spirit, to all fields of life.

Worship and Senses

Man's perception is not merely by his senses, nor is it merely an intellectual and non-material reasoning either! It is a mixture of reasoning plus material and non-material feeling. When worship is required to perform its function in a way with which man interacts perfectly, and whereby it harmonizes with his character, worship is composed of a mind and senses; worship then must contain a sensitive aspect and a non-material intellect, so that worship will be compatible with the worshipper's personality, and the worshipper, while performing his worship, lives his attachment to the Absolute with all his existence.

From here, the intention, as well as psychological contention of worship, always rep-

resents its intellectual and non-material aspect, for it links the worshipper to the True Absolute, the Praised, the High, and there are other aspects of worship representing its material aspect. The *qiblah,* towards whose direction each worshipper must direct his face while praying; and *al-Baytu'l-haram,* visited by both those who perform the pilgrimage and those who do the *umrah,* around which they both perform *tawaf;* and the *as-safa* and *al-marwah,* between which he runs; and *Jamratu'l- aqabah,* at which he casts stones; and the Mosque, which is a place especially made for adoration wherein the worshipper practises his worship . . . all these are things related to the senses and tied to worship: there is no prayer without a *qiblah,* nor *tawaf* without *al-Baytu'l-haram, . . .* and so on, for the sake of satisfying the part related to the senses in the worshipper and giving it its right and share of worship!

This is the midway direction in organizing worship and coining it according to man's in-

stincts as well as his particular intellectual and sensual make-up.

Two other directions face him: one of them goes to the extreme in bringing man to his senses, if the expression is accurate at all, treating him as though he had been a non-material intellect, opposing all sensual expressions of his in worship's sphere, for as long as the True Absolute, the Praised One, has no limited place or time, nor can He be represented by a statute; then His worship has to stand on such a premise, and in the manner which enables the comparative thinking of man to address the Absolute Truth.

Such a trend of thinking is not approved by Islamic jurisprudence, for in spite of its concern about the intellectual aspects brought forth by the *hadith:* "An hour's contemplation is better than a year's adoration," it also believes that pious worship, no matter how deep, cannot totally fill man's self or occupy his leisure, nor

can it attach him to the Absolute Truth in all his existence, for man has never been purely an intellect ... !

From this realistic and objective starting-point, rites in Islam have been based on both intellectual and sensous bases. The person per forming his prayers is practising by his intention an intellectual adoration, denying his Lord any limits, measurements, or the like. For when he starts his prayer with *"Allahu akbar* (God is Great)", while taking at the same time the holy *ka'bah* as a divine slogan towards which he directs his feelings and movements, so that he lives worship by both intellect and feeling, logic and emotion, non-materialistically as well as intellectually.

The other trend goes to the extreme in the part related to the senses, changing the slogan to an idenity and the hint to reality, causing the worship of the symbol to substitute what the symbol really stands for, and the direction

towards the hint instead of the reality it points to; thus, the worshipping person sinks, in this manner or that, in *shirk* and paganism.

Such a trend totally annihilates the spirit of worship and it stops its function as a tool linking man and his civilized march to the True Absolute, converting it to a tool for linking him to false absolutes, to symbols which change - through false intellectual stripping of the matter - to an absolute. Thus, false worship becomes a veil between man and his Lord, instead of a link between both of them ... !

Islam has rejected such a trend because Islam convicted paganism in all its norms, smashing its idols and putting an end to all false gods, refusing to take any limited thing as a symbol for the True Absolute, God, the Glorified, or as a personification of Him. But it deeply distinguished between the meaning of the idol which it crushed and that of the *qiblah* it brought, which meaning conveying nothing more than a particu-

lar geographical spot has been divinely favoured by linking it to prayer for the sake of satisfying the worshipper's aspect related to the senses. Paganism is really nothing but a deviated attempt to satisfy such an aspect, and Islamic jurisprudence has been able to correct it, providing a straight path in harmonizing between the worship of God, as being dealing with the Absolute Who has neither limit nor personification, and the need of man who is composed of feeling and intellect to worship God by both of his feeling and intellect ... !

The Social Aspect of Worship

Essentially, worship represents the relationship between man and his Lord. It provides this relationship with elements of survival and stabil ity. But this has been formulated in the Islamic jurisprudence in a way which often made it an instrument for the relationship between man and his brother man, and this is what we call

the social aspect of worship.

Some rituals force, by their nature, segregation and the establishment of social relations among those who practise that ritual. For example, *jihad* requires those fighting worshippers of God to establish among themselves such relations as would naturally happen among the corps of a fighting army.

There are other rituals which do not necessarily enforce congregating, but in spite of this, they are linked in this way or the other to congregation, in order to bring forth a mixture between man's relation with his Lord and his own relation with his brethren men.

Among prayers' rituals is the congregation wherein the individual's prayer becomes a group's worship, strengthening the ties among the group, deepening the spiritual links among them through their unity in practising the rituals.

The tenet of pilgrimage has definite timings and places, and each participant in it has to practise it within those timings and places; hence, such participation evolves as a great social activity!

Even the tenet of fasting, which by nature is a purely individual act, is tied to the fitr Feast, as the social facet of this tenet, uniting its participants in their ecstasy of vanquishing their desires and inclinations!

While siding by man's relation with his Lord, the tenet of *zakat* creates spontaneously a relation between him and his patron to whom he pays it, or to the poor man, or to the charitable project channelled directly by *zakat.*

So do we observe that the social relation is found in this way or the other side by side with the relation between the worshipper and his Lord in performing one ritualistic practice of a social role in man's life, and it cannot be

considered successful except when it becomes a dynamic force properly directing whatever social relations it faces.

The social aspect of worship reaches its zenith through whatever slogans worship puts forth on the social stage as spiritual symbol to the nation's unity, feeling of genuinity and distinction. The *qiblah* or *haram* House, is but a slogan put forth by Islamic jurisprudence through its legislation of worship and prayers. Such a slogan has not been taken as merely a religious dimension, but it also has its social dimension as the symbol of this nation's unity and genuinity. Therefore, when this jurisprudence legislated for them their new *qiblah,* Muslims faced a great deal of harassment from the mongers, as the Holy Qur'an states, for those mongers realized the social implication of this jurisprudence, and that it was a phenomenon which endowed the nation its personality, making it an even nation:

وَ كَذٰلِكَ جَعَلْنَاكُمْ اُمَّةً وَسَطًا لِتَكُونُوا شُهَدَاءَ عَلَى
النَّاسِ وَ يَكُونَ الرَّسُولُ عَلَيْكُمْ شَهِيدًا وَمَا جَعَلْنَا
الْقِبْلَةَ الَّتِي كُنْتَ عَلَيْهَا اِلَّا لِنَعْلَمَ مَنْ يَتَّبِعُ
الرَّسُولَ مِمَّنْ يَنْقَلِبُ عَلٰى عَقِبَيْهِ وَاِنْ كَانَتْ
لَكَبِيرَةً اِلَّا عَلَى الَّذِينَ هَدَى اللّٰهُ وَمَا كَانَ اللّٰهُ
لِيُضِيعَ اِيمَانَكُمْ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَؤُفٌ رَحِيمٌ *
قَدْ نَرٰى تَقَلُّبَ وَجْهِكَ فِي السَّمَاءِ فَلَنُوَلِّيَنَّكَ قِبْلَةً
تَرْضٰيهَا فَوَلِّ وَجْهَكَ شَطْرَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ وَ
حَيْثُ مَا كُنْتُمْ فَوَلُّوا وُجُوهَكُمْ شَطْرَهُ...

(البقرة : ١٤٣ — ١٤٤)

Thus have We made of you an ummah justly balanced, that ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Apostle a witness over yourselves; and We appointed the qiblah to which thou wast used, only to test those who followed the Apostle from those who would turn on their heels (from

the Faith). *Indeed it was* (a **change)** *mo-mentous, except to those guided by Allah. And never would Allah make your faith of no effect. Allah is to all people most surely full of kindness, most Merciful.*

We see the turning of thy face (for guid-ance) *to the heavens: now shall We turn thee to a qiblah that shall please thee. Turn then thy face in the direction of the sacred Mosque: wherever ye are, turn your faces in that direction . . .* (Qur'an, 2:143-*144)*

These are just few remarks on rites in Islamic jurisprudence.

In addition to all this, there are other general important lines representing the role of rites in man's life and their social character istics as we have discussed above, the roles and detailed particulars of each rite. For each rite brought forth by Islamic jurisprudence there

are effects, characteristics and hues of output for the worshipper, and for man's civilized march as a whole. There is no room here to deal with that in detail. Therefore, we leave the roles, detailed particulars and the exposition of axioms and benefits implied in the instructions of the legislator concerning each of these Islamic rites to another level of discourse. We have already given some of our students permission to cover that. From God do we derive assistance, and Him do we implore not to deprive us of the honour of worshipping Him, praying Him to reckon us and His pleased servants, to forgive us through His Mercy and Bounty; verily, His Mercy has encompassed all things:

وَمَا لِيَ لَا أَعْبُدُ الَّذِي فَطَرَنِي وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ

(يس : ٢٢)

Why should I not worship Him Who has created me, and to Him do ye return?! (Qur'an, 36:22)

This book has been finished on *Jamadi al-awwal 2,* 1396 Hijri.

All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the worlds; prayers and salutations be upon Muhammad and all those purely-guided ones among his progeny.